

PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY IN SHIDA KARTLI

A COMMUNITY-INFORMED STRATEGY



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Peace, security and stability in Shida Kartli – a community-informed strategy

Introduction

This report summarises the results of a process to identify and plan for challenges to peace, security and stability in Shida Kartli, undertaken by a group of local society representatives in 2010. It first describes challenges identified by the group, then analyses the four challenges they consider to be most important and provides recommendations for how they should be addressed. The resulting ‘strategy’ is community-informed. This means that the group of society representatives consulted with a wide group of communities at each step of the process (i.e. identification of challenges, analysis of key challenges and strategising solutions) in order to get their thoughts and perspectives. As such, this is not an ‘expert analysis’, but one grounded in the understanding and reality of people living in Shida Kartli. We hope that this report will help local, national and international decision-makers to better address challenges facing the region.

This report is one outcome of the project *Promoting broader and more informed dialogue on conflict, security and peace in Georgia*. Jointly implemented by the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, the Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association and Saferworld, this project is designed to develop the capacity of Georgian civil society to analyse, and play a constructive role in policy development on, issues related to conflict, security and peace. The process involves a two-way conversation between representative groups and wider society in the regions of Kvemo Kartli, Samegrelo, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Shida Kartli. It also involves regular meetings between representatives of these regions, to share outcomes from their respective analyses. The process has the following objectives:

1. to elicit information from community members about their perspectives on conflict issues
2. to provide more balanced and impartial information about conflict issues

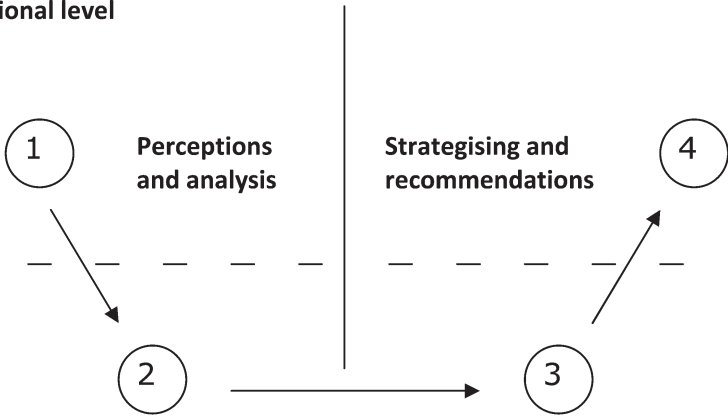
3. to stimulate people to think about these issues in new and wider ways
4. to share perspectives between community members in the different regions.

The overall process consists of four stages (see diagram below). The purpose of the first stage was to understand community perspectives on the causes and effects of the August 2008 war in the four target regions, and the differences between the perspectives held by people in these regions. The results of this stage are captured in the report ‘Community perceptions of the *causes* and *effects* of the August 2008 conflict in Kvemo Kartli, Samegrelo, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Shida Kartli’. The second stage focused on deeper analysis of challenges for peace, security and stability in each of the target regions, while the third stage focused on the development of strategies to respond to key region-specific challenges. This report is one of four summarising the region-specific results of stages two and three (the other three reports cover the remaining target regions). For the methodology used to analyse the challenges identified, and to develop corresponding ‘solution strategies’, please see the annex at the end of this report. The fourth and final stage is underway at the time of publication and involves representatives from all four regions working together to plan solutions to shared challenges at the national level.

The value of this process is that it promotes a deep and sustained dialogue among a consistent group of interlocutors, both within and between the four target regions. The strategies for peace, security and stability developed in this process for each of the four regions, and for the nation as a whole, will then serve as the basis for dialogue between Georgian civil society and decision-makers at the regional, national and international levels.

STAGES IN THE DISCUSSION PROCESS

National level



Regional level

1. Causes and effects of the August 2008 conflict
2. Analysis of region-specific challenges to peace, security and stability
3. Strategising solutions to key region-specific challenges
4. Strategising solutions to key shared / national challenges

Summary of the strategy

This strategy looks to address the following key challenges for peace, security and stability in Shida Kartli, as identified by communities:

1. Insecurity in villages along the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) and in the former buffer zone.
2. People do not have information about the assistance that has been delivered to Shida Kartli since the August 2008 war.
3. Low levels of communication and consultation by international organisations with the local population on peacebuilding activities.
4. Limited involvement of communities in decision-making on conflict issues.

To address these challenges the representative group proposes the following:

Increase security in villages along the ABL and in the former buffer zone, through:

- Consultation with the population along the ABL on their security needs.
- Greater opportunity for people to visit friends and loved ones across the ABL.
- Support for economic and social sustainability of communities along the ABL.
- Ensuring communities are confident that violence will not happen again in the future.

Ensure that people are aware of socio-economic programmes implemented in Shida Kartli, through:

- Establishing mechanisms for, and a 'culture' of, information provision in local government agencies.
- International and local NGOs prioritising information provision on their projects to communities.

Increase engagement between international organisations and local communities when planning peacebuilding initiatives, through:

- Improved communication between communities and international organisations on planned initiatives.
- Establishing processes for better understanding of local opportunities and capacity for peacebuilding.

Increase involvement of communities in national decision-making on conflict issues, through:

- Establishing processes for government agencies to consult with local communities on conflict-related policies and decisions.
- Greater awareness on the part of the population and local authorities of their rights and obligations in local governance processes.
- Development of leadership skills at the community level.

Challenges for peace, security and stability in Shida Kartli

Community consultations conducted by the representative group in June 2010 revealed nine region-specific challenges for peace, security and stability. Based on community views and feedbacks, the first four challenges below were identified as the most important, while the remaining five were considered less pressing.

a) Key challenges

1. *Insecurity in villages along the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) and in the former buffer zone.* Without a more secure environment, communities living along the ABL and in the former buffer zone will continue to suffer from low levels of economic and social development. This trend will both reinforce migration out of the area and weaken those ties that remain between ethnic Georgians and Ossetians separated by the ABL – making future conflict resolution an even harder task.
2. *People do not have information about the assistance that has been delivered to Shida Kartli since the August 2008 war.* Without proper transparency about the assistance already delivered to Shida Kartli, as well as that planned in the future – in terms of objectives, amounts of money, recipients and decision-making processes – there is limited opportunity for accountability and scrutiny by local communities. This means that the overall effectiveness of assistance is reduced, increasing the likelihood of future instability.
3. *Low levels of communication and consultation by international organisations with the local population on peacebuilding activities.* Low levels of communication and consultation mean that the peace process and strategies being pursued by international organisations are not well placed to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities. In particular, it is felt that they do not pay enough attention to local initiatives to rebuild relationships between Geor-

gians and South Ossetians through ‘public diplomacy’. This disconnect between local priorities and international actions may eventually damage relationships between the local population and international actors.

4. *Limited involvement of communities in decision-making on conflict issues.* The lack of involvement of local communities in decision-making processes to resolve local issues means that government responses to the August 2008 war have, in some cases, reduced people’s sense of human security – especially in areas close to the ABL. Furthermore, many people feel that the Government’s actions are directly contributing to the continuing disruption of relationships between Georgians and South Ossetians.

b) Other challenges

5. *Ethnic differences and tensions between Georgians and Ossetians.* People believe that Ossetians living in South Ossetia have acted in a more aggressive way since August 2008. This is reflected in the increase in disagreements over everyday problems such as provision of irrigation water.
6. *Negative impact of humanitarian assistance on social structures.* People believe that the scale of humanitarian assistance delivered in the region has undermined social fabric as people have come to rely on external assistance, rather than their own endeavours. This has, for example, led to people exaggerating their needs so as to gain assistance.
7. *A new generation of internally displaced persons (IDPs).* Following the August 2008 war most of the population displaced from Didi and Patara Liakhvi were accommodated in Shida Kartli. Challenges remain for their integration with the local population, and their perceived ‘special treatment’ by the local authorities results in feelings of inequality and discrimination among the host population.
8. *Physical and psychological impact of the war.* The August 2008 war had a significant impact on the population, increasing the num-

ber of persons suffering from cardiovascular diseases and nervous breakdowns, as well as the number of suicides and violent incidents (including domestic violence). Measures taken by both the government and other service providers to respond to the physical and psychological impact of the war have not been sufficient.

9. *Reduced opportunities for trade.* Georgians and Ossetians enjoyed close economic ties during the 1990s and before the August 2008 war. This included trade through the market in Ergneti, as well as partnerships on construction sites and in agricultural initiatives such as cattle breeding and cultivation of plots of land. These trade links helped to restore ties between Ossetians and Georgians, but also resulted in smuggling through the region. These ties were weakened with the closure of the Ergneti market and have further reduced since the August 2008 war, affecting the wellbeing of local communities.

Key challenge 1: Insecurity in villages along the Administrative Boundary Line and in the former buffer zone

a) Importance for local peace, security and stability

Without a more secure environment, communities living along the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) and in the former buffer zone will continue to suffer from low levels of economic and social development. This trend will both reinforce migration out of the area and weaken those ties that remain between ethnic Georgians and Ossetians separated by the ABL – making future conflict resolution an even harder task.

b) Local impact (who suffers and how do they suffer)

- The population along the ABL are unable to move freely and access natural resources – such as land, water, wood and pastures. In addition, people feel vulnerable after harvests, fearing that they could be victims of violence and that their harvested produce could be stolen. This has had a knock-on effect on the economic sustainability of these communities, increasing the risk of poverty.
- The ABL area is experiencing ongoing outward migration, especially by women and young people, who are seeking a safer environment in which to live. Outward migration further reinforces people's sense of insecurity and pessimism about the future of the area.
- People with friends and relations across the ABL in South Ossetia / the Tskhinvali Region are not always unable to maintain relationships because of the insecure environment and restrictions on movement. Young people will not grow up in contact with ethnic Ossetians across the ABL. This will result in a 'generation shift' – as the older generation passes away, Georgian and Ossetian cultures will become more estranged.
- Russia has military bases and personnel in South Ossetia. When these forces conduct military exercises, many people become afraid

that these exercises represent either a direct and imminent attack or that the exercises could be used as a provocation to restart the war.

c) Driving factors (causes and actors)

- Memories of violence committed during the August 2008 war are still fresh.
- Ongoing security incidents across the ABL by criminals and security forces (both Ossetian and Russian), including cases of detention, the theft of animals and harvests, and shootings. While the number of incidents has decreased over time, they still pose a real risk to people living along the ABL and are more common in some communities and villages.
- Ossetian and Russian security forces have restricted movement across the ABL, and people caught crossing are often detained. At the same time, Georgian security forces often also restrict movement across the ABL or along the Georgian-controlled side.
- Many people living in the area believe that the Georgian State and its security forces are not able to ensure security for the communities living there. At the same time, the absence of an agreed security mechanism, including the presence of an international peacekeeping force, keeps tensions at a high level. The presence of European Union Monitors, although recognised as a stabilising factor, is not enough to make people feel secure.
- Lack of access to accurate and objective information about security issues, whether from the national media, Georgian authorities or international sources, increases tensions and fear in communities along the ABL. People often do not understand what is happening – for example when they hear shootings – and rumours of potential risks go unchallenged.
- People do not understand the policies of the US and European countries and there is a widespread perception that the international response to the war and post-conflict situation has been weak. As a result, people living along the ABL are not confident that the international community would act to prevent future violence.

d) Recommendations

In order **to increase security in villages along the ABL and in the former buffer zone**, the representative group recommends the following:

1. *Consultation with the population along the ABL on their security needs:*
 - a) The Government, the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) and other relevant actors provide information to communities living along the ABL on security issues, especially to challenge rumours or false information that may increase fear and tensions.
 - b) The Government, in co-operation with the international community, undertakes a study of community needs and distributes this study to relevant decision-makers.
 - c) International organisations and local government agencies establish regular forums to meet with communities along the ABL, to consult with them on their concerns and how they can be addressed.
 - d) Competent authorities conduct de-mining operations along the ABL in response to community needs.
2. *Greater opportunity for people to visit friends and loved ones across the ABL:*
 - a) The Georgian Government, mediated by the international community, starts discussions with Russian and Ossetian representatives on how to manage movement of local people across the ABL.
 - b) The Georgian police / Ministry of Internal Affairs allow local communities to cross the ABL freely.
3. *Support for the economic and social sustainability of communities along the ABL:*
 - a) The Government, in co-operation with national and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international partners, elaborates and implements a strategy of social, economic and educational support for the population along the ABL.

- b) The Government establishes a tax incentive regime for the population of villages along the ABL and the former buffer zone.
 - c) The Government establishes a programme of support for agricultural development of the region, including access to agricultural machinery for the population.
 - d) The local government, in co-operation with local communities, marks cattle so as to ensure their registration.
4. *Communities are confident that violence will not happen again in the future:*
- a) The Georgian Government, through active diplomacy, intensifies initiatives to negotiate deployment of an international peace-keeping force, including with Russia, and the South Ossetian *de facto* authorities.
 - b) Official government statements and diplomatic proposals relating to improving relations with Russia, should be honoured through the Government's actions at all levels.
 - c) The international community, and the European Union (EU) in particular, should make a strong commitment to the prevention of violence in the future, and should communicate this to communities on the ground.

Key challenge 2: People do not have information about the assistance that has been delivered to Shida Kartli since the August 2008 war

a) Importance for local peace, security and stability

Without proper transparency about the assistance already delivered to Shida Kartli, as well as that planned in the future – in terms of objectives, amounts of money, recipients and decision-making processes – there is limited opportunity for accountability and scrutiny by local communities. This means that the overall effectiveness of assistance is reduced, increasing the likelihood of future instability.

b) Local impact (who suffers and how do they suffer)

- Much of the population have no idea what kind of assistance was and is available and how it can be accessed. This means that many vulnerable people do not always access that assistance which is available.
- A majority of the population in the region share the belief that they have not benefited from the assistance delivered to the region since the war in 2008, or that other communities have benefited more (and unfairly). This has led to resentment towards international organisations as well as tensions within and between communities.
- The manner in which assistance has been delivered (lack of information and consultative mechanisms) has disempowered communities in the area as it has undermined (rather than reinforced) public accountability and reduced civic activism.
- This also means that the overall effectiveness of nationally and internationally provided assistance is reduced and that key vulnerabilities resulting from the violence and ongoing conflict have not necessarily been tackled.
- Lack of information and accountability of assistance, and how it has been delivered, also increases the potential for corruption by government officials. It is certainly the case that many people believe that government officials have benefited financially and politically.

c) Driving factors (causes and actors)

- Local municipal authorities have poor mechanisms for disseminating information to communities on available assistance and how it can be accessed. Weak information mechanisms are reinforced by the absence of an ‘informational culture’ among local government representatives – whereby they actively try to deliver information to those who need it.
- International organisations have not prioritised providing information to communities on assistance and how it is delivered, and have not properly consulted with communities before doing so. Indeed, international organisations have prioritised consultation with, and reporting to, their donors.
- The sheer number of actors providing assistance has made information management very difficult. Indeed, all actors – whether local agencies or international organisations – have not spent enough time co-ordinating their activities.
- There are indications that the distribution of some assistance (specifically rehabilitation of houses and compensation for damages) has been used by politicians to ‘buy’ votes. As a result, it would not be in their interest for information on assistance to be readily available.
- While there is a desire to understand how funds are being used, local civil society and communities do not have the experience of demanding information (because of social customs and respect for those in authority) or the skills to engage with government officials.

d) Recommendations

In order to ensure that people are aware of socio-economic programmes implemented in Shida Kartli, the representative group recommends the following:

1. *Establishment of mechanisms for, and a ‘culture’ of, information provision in local government agencies:*
 - a) The Government, in consultation with civil society, amends the law by which government agencies will be legally obliged to disseminate information on socio-economic programmes through local and national media.

- b) Local government develops a plan for information provision at the municipal and local (community levels).
 - c) International and local NGOs develop a training programme in information provision for local government representatives.
2. *International and local NGOs prioritise information provision on their projects to communities:*
- a) International and local NGOs agree a process for disseminating information on i) all projects, their financing and impact since the August 2008 war; ii) upcoming programmes, their financing and objectives.
 - b) Donors fund civil society organisations and the media to scrutinise how funds provided to government agencies by international organisations are spent, in order to be able to hold them to account.
 - c) International and local NGOs ensure proper co-ordination, through regular meetings at the municipal level that are open to public participation.

Key challenge 3: Low levels of communication and consultation by international organisations with the local population on peacebuilding activities

a) Importance for local peace, security and stability

Low levels of communication and consultation between international organisations (EUMM, NATO, EU, UN) and the population in Shida Kartli means that the peace process and strategies being pursued by international organisations are not well placed to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities. In particular, it is felt that they do not pay enough attention to local initiatives to rebuild relationships between Georgians and South Ossetians through ‘public diplomacy’. This disconnect between local priorities and international actions may eventually damage relationships between the local population and international actors.

b) Local impact (who suffers and how do they suffer)

- A substantial part of the population in Shida Kartli believe that their opinions on conflict issues are not being taken into account and that they are not properly engaged in the peace process.
- In particular, many people want to be engaged in public diplomacy activities, but do not feel that such projects are being prioritised and supported by the international community. There is a perception that international organisations have the tools to promote steps towards conflict resolution, but that they are not using these tools.
- The international community does not fully understand the conflict-related needs and priorities of communities in Shida Kartli, and their actions are not always adequate for meeting them.
- People in Shida Kartli have lost confidence in international organisations.

c) Driving factors (causes and actors)

- There is very little real communication by international organisations about their mandates, intentions and interests to local commu-

nities. Communities simply observe events and international actions that take place around them and make their own assessments.

- There is a perception that international organisations come to Georgia with pre-prepared and pre-approved approaches and programmes, based on experiences in other countries and situations, which are implemented here without taking into account the local context.
- The international community focuses on consultation with the Government and on government priorities regarding the conflict, rather than consulting with communities and understanding their needs and priorities.

d) Recommendations

In order **to increase engagement between international organisations and local communities when planning peacebuilding initiatives**, the representative group recommends the following:

1. *Improved communication between communities and international organisations on planned initiatives:*
 - a) International organisations operating in the region sign up to a code of conduct committing them to provide to the population information about their mandate, planned activities and budget.
 - b) International organisations, with support from local civil society, should organise regular consultation meetings with local communities, for example through the establishment of community councils.
 - c) International and local NGOs ensure proper co-ordination, through regular meetings at the municipal level that are open to public participation.
2. *Establishment of processes for better understanding of local opportunities and capacity for peacebuilding:*
 - a) Before starting any initiative, international organisations conduct studies to identify the needs and priorities of the local population.

- b) International organisations include community representatives in the planning and monitoring of peacebuilding initiatives.
- c) International NGOs, in co-operation with Georgian civil society, should organise and finance conferences on conflict issues and ensure the participation of Georgians, ethnic Ossetians and Russians (including students).
- d) The international community prioritises projects aimed at infrastructure development, communication and trade (for example through the establishment of free trade areas) across the ABL.

Key challenge 4: Limited involvement of communities in decision-making on conflict issues

a) Importance for local peace, security and stability

The lack of involvement of local communities in decision-making processes to resolve local issues means that government responses to the August 2008 war have, in some cases, reduced people's sense of human security – especially in areas close to the ABL. Furthermore, many people feel that the Government's actions are directly contributing to the continuing disruption of relationships between Georgians and South Ossetians.

b) Local impact (who suffers and how do they suffer)

- Decisions made on conflict issues have not always been to the benefit of local communities, and have in some cases worsened local conflict dynamics. For example, during consultations, community members stated that the closure of the Ergeneti Market in 2004 reduced contact between ethnic Ossetians and Georgians, while the establishment of the South Ossetian administration in 2006 increased tensions.
- The police regularly punish and obstruct people who cross the ABL to visit family, friends, graveyards, to engage in small-scale trade, or to chase wandering livestock. This is seen by communities as counter-productive to their security and to long-term prospects for peacebuilding.
- Although the Government has undertaken a number of initiatives to solve water issues in the region, these initiatives are often implemented without proper consultation with local communities and therefore do not take the local context into account. As a result many initiatives only partially solve the problems that communities are facing.
- Some communities still have links with people on the other side of the ABL. These links could be used to solve local problems when they arise (e.g. relating to electricity or water supply). However, there is a perception that when the Government gets involved, it

ignores the relationship resources that exist within communities and develops strategies for solving these problems that actually damage relationships and make the situation worse.

c) Driving factors (causes and actors)

- Decisions on issues in the region are mostly taken at the national level in Tbilisi rather than by regional authorities. While legislation provides for some level of self-governance by regional authorities, this is not implemented in practice.
- After the August 2008 war many projects and a lot of money were directed by the Government toward responding to the impacts of the war in the region, especially among communities living close to the ABL. However, the decision-making process on how to use this money does not allow for community perspectives.
- Indeed, people in the region do not feel empowered to voice their opinions to the authorities. This is partly because of a feeling that they will not be listened to, and partly through a sense that it is not their place to challenge or question those in a position of authority.
- The media tends to focus on issues of interest to the Government, rather than reflecting the voices and opinions of communities in the region. As a result, coverage of conflict-related issues in the region can be incorrect or unbalanced. However, it should be noted that media reporting has improved gradually since August 2008.

d) Recommendations

In order **to increase the involvement of communities in national decision-making on conflict issues**, the representative group recommends the following:

1. *Establish processes for government agencies to consult with local communities on conflict-related policies and decisions:*
 - a) The Georgian Government organises regular consultation meetings and conducts studies on community perspectives. A starting point would be to consult on how the Government's 'Strategy for Engagement' could be implemented in practice.

- b) Political parties have to work in the region to understand the conflict-related needs and priorities of local communities, and not only before the elections.
 - c) The local media endeavours to properly report on the conflict-related needs and priorities of the regional population and how these are reflected in the policies of the different parties (as noted above, there is already a positive trend in this direction).
- 2. *Greater awareness on the part of the population and local authorities of their rights and obligations in local governance processes:*
 - a) With the international community acting as a mediator, the Georgian Government and civil sector organise informational meetings, campaigns and trainings on human rights and good governance (including working with the population to raise awareness of their responsibility to go and vote and how elected local government is accountable to them).
 - b) The Government, in co-operation with civil society, increases civic education programmes in the schools.
 - c) Local NGOs support communities (through trainings and informational campaigns) to engage with local elected government in a constructive manner in order to explain their perceptions on conflict-related issues and the importance of re-establishing normal human relations with people on the other side of the ABL.
- 3. *Development of leadership skills at the community level:*
 - a) Civil society develops programmes to encourage community leaders to take responsibility for being points of contact in their community and for accessing information.
 - b) Civil society builds the capacity of community leaders to access information from the Government and from international organisations.
 - c) Civil society supports local communities to run advocacy campaigns on issues of local importance.

Annex: methodology for analysing problems and strategising solutions

For each identified key challenge the representative group worked through a process of first developing a more elaborated ‘problem statement’ to explain the challenge. On the basis of each problem statement, the group then developed a ‘solution strategy’ for how to resolve the challenge, which in turn provided the material for specific recommendations. At each stage in this process, the representative group consulted with a range of communities in their region, as well as with representatives from other regions.

Developing a ‘problem statement’

In order to develop a problem statement for a specific challenge, the representative group was facilitated to analyse (1) the driving factors behind the problem – that is *what* causes the problem and *who* is responsible, and (2) the impact of the problem – that is *who* suffers and *how* they suffer. Drawing on the identified impacts, the group was then asked to clearly articulate (3) why the issue is important for peace, security and stability in their region.

Turning a ‘problem statement’ into a ‘solution strategy’

Once the problem statement had been developed, the group was then asked to develop a corresponding ‘solution strategy’. To do this, they were first asked to identify (1) the overall change that they would like to see in relation to the challenge. They were then asked to identify the key things that need to happen in society to achieve this overall change. That is, to identify (2) the preconditions that need to be met, whether changes to policies, practices, attitudes or behaviours. The most difficult aspect of this part of the process was to make sure that the list did not become a long ‘shopping list’. As such, the group was encouraged to capture only those elements that are absolutely necessary, and without which the overall change could not happen. Finally, the group was asked to brainstorm (3) the steps or changes that are necessary in order to bring about each of these pre-conditions. Please see below for an example ‘solution strategy’ given to the group to assist their thinking.

Example solution strategy – for illustrative purposes only

1) Overall change wanted			
To create an enabling environment where marginalised women from conflict-affected communities can protect their rights and take an active part in decision-making			
2) Key preconditions that need to be met in order to achieve the overall change			
Women have increased confidence and desire to take part in political life	Women have increased and relevant skills to take part in political life	There are adequate laws to protect women's rights	There is public support for the inclusion of women in decision-making, public life, and for the protection of women's rights
3) Necessary steps to bring about the key preconditions			
↑ Women's successes receive as much recognition as those of men	↑ Women's access to development opportunities increases	↑ There is clear and wide-spread understanding of what women's rights are	↑ There are changes in the perception of the role of women in society
Women have a strong support network	There is an environment in which women can play multiple roles	Civil society is organized and is pushing for greater protection of women's rights	
Women feel an active demand for their input	Women are aware of appropriate career paths for political life	There are champions of women's rights in the political system	
Women see the results of their actions	Culture of politics and public life allows for skills to develop	There is a base of information on the social benefits of women's participation	
Political culture becomes less macho.			

Developing recommendations from the ‘solution strategy’

The group was then asked to draw recommendations from the solution strategy by (1) reformulating each precondition as a key issue that needs to be resolved, and (2) reformulating each step as a precise recommendation of *what* needs to be done and *who* is responsible for the change. Please see below for example recommendations provided to the group to assist their thinking.

Example recommendations – for illustrative purposes only

1) Key issue to be resolved
Enhance the confidence and desire of women to take part in political life
3) Specific recommendations
<div>↑</div> <div>That the Georgian media increase their coverage of women’s involvement in community and public life, highlighting the contributions that women are making to Georgian society.</div> <div>That national and international NGOs support women to play an active role in politics, by providing relevant training, encouragement and mobilizing women around opportunities for advocacy;</div> <div>That all political parties, international organizations and NGOs actively seek the input of women when they are formulating new policies</div> <div>That all political parties actively recruit women as members and examine their working culture and practices to ensure that they are gender sensitive.</div>

This report is based on the consultations, analysis and strategising conducted by the following group members in Shida Kartli, and has been validated by them:

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The Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD)

The Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD) is a public policy think-tank specialising in the broad area of democracy development. CIPDD was founded in 1992 in Tbilisi, Georgia. It is a non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation. It advocates policy goals such as the development of a vibrant and diverse civil society, effective and accountable public institutions based on the rule of law and an integrated political community, one which at the same time respects and preserves the identities of different ethnic and religious communities. CIPDD's main activities include public policy research and publishing and disseminating its results, and organising different forms of debate – professional, political or public – about this work.



The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)

The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) is a non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting human rights and the rule of law. We adhere to the Constitution of Georgia, legislation and our Statute on the whole territory of Georgia. GYLA is a membership-based organisation.

Goals of GYLA:

- Promote the rule of law;
- Protect human rights and freedoms;
- Increase public legal awareness;
- Promote norms of professional ethics among lawyers;
- Develop the skills and competence of lawyers;
- Develop the legislative basis for civil society and the rule of law in the country.



Saferworld

Saferworld works to prevent and reduce violent conflict and promote co-operative approaches to security. We work with governments, international organisations and civil society to encourage and support effective policies and practises through advocacy, research and policy development and through supporting the actions of others.

Peace, security and stability in Shida Kartli – a community-informed strategy

According to local communities, the following challenges have to be met to ensure peace, security and stability in the region:

Increase security in villages along the ABL and in the former buffer zone. Without a more secure environment, communities living along the ABL and in the former buffer zone will continue to suffer from low levels of economic and social development. This trend will both reinforce migration out of the area and weaken those ties that remain across the divide.

Ensure that people are aware of socio-economic programmes implemented in Shida Kartli. Without proper transparency about the assistance delivered to Shida Kartli, there is limited opportunity for accountability and scrutiny by local communities. This means that the overall effectiveness of assistance is reduced – increasing the likelihood of future instability.

Increase engagement between international organisations and local communities when planning peacebuilding initiatives. Low levels of communication and consultation mean that the peace process and strategies being pursued by international organisations are not well placed to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities, undermining their effectiveness and damaging relationships between the local population and international actors.

Increase the involvement of communities in national decision-making on conflict issues. The lack of involvement of local communities in decision-making on local conflict issues means that Government responses to the August 2008 war have, in some cases, reduced people's sense of human security – especially in areas close to the ABL. Furthermore, many people feel that the Government's actions are directly contributing to the continuing disruption of relationships between Georgians and South Ossetians.

Detailed recommendations for how to address each challenge are included in this report.

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